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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 8 May 1990, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia)

- General exchange of views (continued)
- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): I am pleased to be here with you, Sir, and my colleagues for this year's meeting of the Disarmament Commission. I should like to join wholeheartedly in the many expressions of congratulations to you upon your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission and to assure you of my delegation's full co-operation as we move through the Commission's programme of work.

My remarks today will be confined to more general aspects of our business here. Most specific agenda items will be dealt with in the subordinate bodies of the Commission, and the United States delegation will have ample opportunity to state our specific substantive views in those forums. I believe, therefore, that it may be more useful at this plenary meeting to take an overall look at the way the Disarmament Commission operates, including reflections on the direction we think the Commission should take in the future. Collectively, we have to find better ways to develop our substantive work more realistically. Without this, we will be wasting our time.

This is the first session of the Disarmament Commission that I am attending. As I was coming here, I was concerned that it might also be the last. It is an open secret that many have come to regard the Disarmament Commission as ineffective and even moribund. While the Commission has had a few successes to its credit, its agenda in the past has largely been filled with topics on which no agreed recommendations were possible. There has been little change in that agenda in years.

Fortunately, however, there has been recent and general recognition that this institution should be revitalized if it is to be kept alive. Various efforts in private discussions and Ambassador Bagbeni's informal meetings on the margins of

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last year's meetings of the First Committee have given us a number of ideas with which to work. While my delegation may not completely agree on the usefulness of work on all of the current Disarmament Commission agenda items, we strongly support the larger objective of modernizing this body.

The first step is already behind us - adoption of the annex to General Assembly resolution 44/119 C. Incidentally, this annex was only noted, rather than approved, by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session because of the need to maintain the principle that nothing that might be developed in informal consultations among members of the Disarmament Commission can have official status unless approved by the Commission as such.

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The annex contains a number of provisions which, if all are prepared to implement them in practice, will make our work here more rational and effective. The separation of the agenda into general and working agendas; limiting the working agenda to four items; holding the number of working groups to four; limiting to three years the retention of any item on the working agenda; and, perhaps most important, calling for chairmen's summary reports reflecting divergent views on any unagreed items - all those measures will help greatly to move our work along.

At a time of enormous change in Europe, with the resulting improvement in the East-West relationship and the prospect of change elsewhere, it would be futile in the extreme for the Disarmament Commission to continue to focus on issues of a bygone era. Instead of dealing with the same old tired political formulas and arguing over positions that are no longer relevant to the realities of today, we need to look at real security and arms-control problems that are already emerging from the shadows of the fading East-West confrontation and to search for ways of approaching them in a pragmatic and constructive manner.

A number of useful suggestions for improvement were made during the general debate of the First Committee last fall. We should examine them carefully. For my part, I suggest that the time has come to stop using this forum for laying the responsibility for all the ills of our planet at the door of a few nations, however powerful. The time has come to recognize that improvement of security in the various regions requires not only words but also deeds by all the States concerned. The long-heard thesis that some should disarm here and now while most others could contemplate disarmament measures for themselves only in the millennium of general and complete disarmament is no longer credible or sustainable. In that regard, I urge identifying for our future agenda arms-control issues that reflect the security problems of the world as it actually is rather than as some have been seeking to represent it.

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Only if all of us seek to identify common interests will we be able to develop for our future work a realistic and modern agenda that will allow us to engage in truly productive discussions and to arrive at meaningful conclusions that will be useful to all. I suggest, for example, that we look at the possibility of taking up regional security questions and arms races. Why don't we examine conventional-arms imbalances outside of Europe? Ought we not to consider the spread of high technology, super-sophisticated weapons systems that not only complicate the security situation in certain regions but also place a heavy burden on limited economies? In my opinion, those are the emerging international-security topics of the era the world is now entering.

To close these brief remarks, I would emphasize my belief that we have no choice but to seize this opportunity to clear the Disarmament Commission's agenda of deadwood issues, no choice but to modernize Disarmament Commission procedures and to renew the Commission's mandate to study selected arms-control issues in an efficient and productive manner. As rapid change forcefully unfolds around us, we simply can no longer afford to perpetuate the failed practices of the past. In short, the Disarmament Commission must change, or it will become past history.

Mr. KRASULIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to offer the sincere congratulations of the USSR delegation on your election, Sir, to the post of Chairman of this substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. I should like to assure you of our wholehearted support in your efforts to develop a constructive and fruitful dialogue on the issues facing the Commission.

Our work is beginning at a remarkable moment. Forty-five years ago, the most devastating war in the history of mankind came to an end, having caused terrible suffering throughout the planet. Assessments of the years that followed may vary,

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but our most important lesson has probably been that mankind has no future when it stands at the edge of the abyss of military lunacy. We must do our best to ensure the survival of civilization and to build a new model of international security that would forever preclude war and guarantee security by reducing arms stockpiles to the level of reasonable sufficiency for defense, and by switching from nuclear deterrence based on force to deterrence based on transparency, verification, and policies based on respect for the law.

We are convinced that the principle of defensive sufficiency must become a universal rule in the near future. That realistic perspective is based on the expected conclusion of an agreement on a 50 per cent cut in Soviet and American strategic offensive weapons, agreements on conventional forces in Europe, and a chemical-weapons ban, and by continued efforts to reduce armaments and armed forces and eliminate foreign military presence.

In those circumstances, the globalization of the processes of disarmament, the demilitarization of international relations, constructive mutual complementarity of bilateral and multilateral efforts, and the active involvement of all States in reducing arms stockpiles and building confidence are becoming increasingly important. The globalization of disarmament implies multilateral negotiations on all categories of weapons, including tactical nuclear weapons and naval armaments, as well as the adequate contribution by all countries, including developing countries, to solving emerging problems, and the progressive development of the disarmament process in all its aspects.

As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, we have begun to implement the principle of reasonable defensive sufficiency, and we are making those efforts on the basis of a new defensive military doctrine. The decision to reduce

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unilaterally the Soviet armed forces by 500,000 men, announced by President Gorbachev from the United Nations rostrum, is being implemented step by step.

The Soviet military budget for the year 1990 will be 71 billion rubles, or 8.2 per cent lower than that of last year. The procurement of weapons and materiel is being significantly scaled down.

The most important means of building a new model of international security is the gradual elimination of nuclear weapons. We hope that the forthcoming summit meeting in Washington, D.C. will considerably accelerate the conclusion of the agreement on a 50 per cent reduction of Soviet and United States strategic offensive weapons. The main sticking points right now are the problems of air-launched and sea-launched cruise missiles. The Soviet Union is determined to seek mutually acceptable ways of solving the most complex problems in order to ensure the signing of an agreement on the reduction of strategic offensive weapons by the end of the year.

We believe that after the signing of the agreement on a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive weapons, it will be necessary to proceed without delay to the next phase of nuclear-arms reductions to ensure the continuity of the process. In our view, we could initiate a dialogue in the very near future on further reducing strategic weapons while preserving strategic stability.

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At the same time we could discuss ways to change the structure of Soviet and United States strategic forces so as to exclude the possibility of a first strike. Both sides must also continue to observe the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems in the form in which it was signed in 1972.

The time has evidently come to make tactical nuclear weapons a separate issue for negotiations. We note with satisfaction the statement of President Bush that the United States has decided not to modernize its ground-based tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and not to deploy the new and more powerful Lance tactical missiles. That decision can be viewed as the result of a sober analysis of the situation in Europe. The Soviet Union considers it necessary to begin negotiations on tactical nuclear missiles prior to signing an agreement on conventional forces in Europe. We believe that those questions should be discussed in tandem, and the discussion should, of course, include air-based nuclear systems. Against that background the statements made in some circles within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in favour of deploying new air-launched missiles equipped with nuclear warheads in the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany strike a particularly dissonant note.

For reasons that are well known, the practical talks on measures to reduce nuclear arsenals have so far centred on the Soviet-United States efforts. In our view, however, the problem of reducing the danger of nuclear war must be solved through multilateral channels. A possible format for an agreement on that issue was presented by the Soviet delegation at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Naturally, multilateral discussions of this whole combination of issues require active participation by other countries and the involvement of the machinery available in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. All States have an objective interest in reducing nuclear stockpiles, and each member of the world

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community is entitled to contribute to that process, in particular within the Disarmament Commission, which is a universal body.

One of the strong components of a new security model could be the conclusion of an international agreement on a controlled reduction in and prohibition of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. The creation of conditions favourable to negotiations could be facilitated by unilateral measures. The Soviet Union has ceased production of highly enriched uranium for military purposes and announced a programme to shut down all of its plutonium reactors by the year 2000. We have also proposed reaching agreement on the non-use for military purposes of nuclear materials released as a result of nuclear-disarmament agreements and on establishing an appropriate monitoring mechanism.

Although a stable consensus has been reached in the United Nations with regard to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons as the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament, the advocates of nuclear deterrence do not see any possibility in the foreseeable future of a total renunciation of the nuclear component of their military capabilities. The notion of so-called minimal nuclear deterrence is being put forward in response. If that notion is to be applied, then it is important to translate it into practical terms, for example by convening a meeting of the representatives of the nuclear Powers and of States which have nuclear weapons stationed in their territory, with a view to determining the nuclear capability sufficient for minimal deterrence.

The cessation and prohibition of nuclear testing require complementary bilateral and multilateral efforts. Today, I am glad to state the road is essentially open for the ratification of the Soviet-United States threshold treaties of 1974 and 1976. Agreement on the continuity of the process of

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negotiations for further interim limitations on nuclear testing, leading to the ultimate goal of its complete cessation, is also of fundamental importance.

We continue to keep open our offer to resume at any time with the United States, on a reciprocal basis, a moratorium on all nuclear explosions, in which other nuclear States could later join.

We consider it necessary to move on to a specific discussion of the problem of a comprehensive test ban in the Conference on Disarmament, with a thorough and substantive review of the proposals put forward in that multilateral negotiating forum. Lastly, at the initiative of a number of non-aligned countries, yet another path will be opened with the convening of a conference to consider amendments to the 1963 Moscow Treaty on the ending of tests in three environments.

In addition to the abolition of nuclear weapons, a reduction in conventional weapons is also of primary importance in creating a new security model. The growing improvement in the international climate and the resolution of conflict situations have opened new opportunities to reduce armed forces and armaments in all regions; this would, of course, be done with due regard for specific conditions and in accordance with the development of a world-wide process of radical cuts in conventional weapons. We welcome the growing attention this topic is receiving within the United Nations and in the Disarmament Commission.

Unique prospects for action in this area are opening in Europe. For the first time in the post-war period, we now have a real opportunity for gradually dismantling the obsolete model of military confrontation and bridging the rift that has split the continent. An appropriate new system of relations must be set up to replace the old one and to ensure European stability and security.

During the Vienna negotiations, in which 23 States are participating, the framework for a future agreement on a reduction in conventional forces has already

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been established, covering six areas: personnel, aircraft, helicopters, tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery. We are concerned, however, at the absence of the necessary momentum in those negotiations. It is our view that the Vienna disarmament forum urgently needs to be given additional impetus.

A new major step towards strengthening security in Europe will be the 199 meeting of the leaders of 35 States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). That meeting could serve as the occasion for signing agreements on conventional forces and, if possible, on confidence-building measures and for identifying further steps to be taken in the field of disarmament and security in Europe. What is most important is that the highest-level leaders of the CSCE countries should define political approaches to the new processes in Europe and think about replacing the bloc system with collective organs for security and co-operation.

In our view, it is important to promote the gradual transformation of existing military and political alliances - the Warsaw Treaty Organization and NATO. As the level of armed confrontation in Europe and throughout the world is reduced, the role of those alliances is being substantially modified to strengthen the political aspects of their activities. In the future, the development of an all-European process will, we believe, lead to a totally new, non-bloc system of reliable collective security in Europe.

Conventional disarmament should be an integral part of a reliable security structure in the Asia-Pacific region as well. The agreement on guidelines for mutual armed-forces reduction and military confidence-building in the Soviet-Chinese frontier area, which was signed a few days ago by the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, is an essential step towards strengthening security in Asia.

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It is important that all countries in the Asia-Pacific region should realize that they have a shared interest in establishing relations of a new kind in the region on the basis of dialogue and co-operation. The efforts aimed at building peaceful communities in Europe and Asia could ultimately result in the establishment of an integral system of security and co-operation throughout Eurasia.

In the Middle East too there must be greater understanding of the dangers of overarmament; the inflated military potential created there could become a serious obstacle to the further development of the disarmament process. It is necessary to initiate an integrated parallel process of curbing the arms race in the Middle East and reaching a peaceful settlement in the region.

New possibilities for regional disarmament measures are undoubtedly being opened by the process of political settlement in Central America as well.

The Secretary-General's proposal to establish under United Nations auspices a multilateral centre for reducing the threat of war holds promise. Such a centre could be based on existing Secretariat units. Another fruitful idea is that of establishing regional centres for preventing the threat of war, with the active participation of regional organizations and associations of States, especially in Europe.

One question related to conventional disarmament is the limitation of international transfers of conventional weapons. We hope that the group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General which is preparing a study on ways to ensure transparency in the arms trade will be able to formulate innovative recommendations that will help shift this problem onto a practical plane at the inter-State level.

The universal nature of disarmament means that it should extend to naval activities and armaments. To exclude the naval component of the military might of States and alliances from the negotiating process would be to leave untouched an

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important aspect of the arms race, undermine the principle of undiminished security for all parties, eventually destabilize the overall military and strategic situation in the world and retard the process of disarmament in other areas.

The Soviet Union has proposed immediate bilateral consultations between experts from the USSR and the United States to lay the groundwork for separate negotiations on the stage-by-stage reduction and elimination of sea-borne tactical nuclear weapons.

Naval issues could also be considered at special consultations involving all States concerned, particularly the major naval Powers, at which they could discuss shared areas of anxiety in this field, the machinery to be used, the final objectives of future negotiations and avenues for a step-by-step approach. Today most States already agree that one could begin with devising confidence-building measures and guarantees for the security of naval communications. We have supported and continue to support the Swedish proposal that the Conference on Disarmament should draft a multilateral agreement on the prevention of incidents at sea and a new protocol on sea mines.

The Disarmament Commission, which today is essentially the only forum for multilateral dialogue on this subject, is playing an important role in co-ordinating the approaches of States to reducing the danger of war at sea. We have heard with great interest the statements of Sweden, Indonesia and other States, which were devoted in large measure to naval questions, and we shall carefully study the ideas contained in them.

In the process of building a new model for security and making the transition from overarmament to a reasonable sufficiency for defence, a crucial role can be played by public and open information in the military field. In this connection, individual measures of openness taken by States must be gradually transformed into

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a broad policy of openness and must ultimately become a norm of international life, encompassing all the components of the military potential of States without exception, including air forces, navies, military bases in third countries and activities in outer space. Measures of openness can and must help avoid crises and decrease the danger of military conflict, whether premeditated or unintended, increase the predictability of military activities and facilitate the process of limiting, reducing and eliminating armaments and of monitoring compliance with obligations in that sphere. In our view, openness should be ensured by comprehensive equality of the rights of States, including equal rights to access to information received under multilateral agreements and to having their interests as participating States protected and taken into account.

In this area too, we believe, the United Nations has a major role to play. The Disarmament Commission might perhaps formulate international criteria and parameters for openness. The submission to the United Nations of data on the armed forces and armaments of Member States, along with the United Nations standardized system of reporting military expenditures, could become an integral part of that régime. For its part, the USSR has undertaken to submit annually to the United Nations information on the overall strength and major armaments of the Soviet armed forces and, starting with the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, to submit detailed data on its military expenditures.

We intend to present to the Commission a working paper on the question of military openness.

Goal-oriented action by all States is required in order to globalize the disarmament process. An integral part of these efforts should be the adoption of a declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. The Soviet Union is ready to participate constructively in the preparation of such a declaration in

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order to make a substantial contribution to ensuring global security through disarmament.

In connection with the question of South Africa's nuclear capability, it is important to stress the need for full implementation of the Declaration on apartheid adopted at the December 1989 special session of the General Assembly and the consequent eradication of the remnants of racism and apartheid in southern Africa. South Africa should immediately accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and unconditionally place all its nuclear facilities under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We believe that by formulating recommendations in that regard by consensus, the Commission could contribute to the political solution of the problems of southern Africa.

The USSR views the Disarmament Commission as one of the most important organs of the United Nations family, responsible for what may be called the monitoring of developments in major areas of arms limitation and reduction and for elaborating, on a democratic and universal basis, recommendations on matters of the highest priority which are susceptible to multilateral solutions. This view of the Commission's work is in keeping with the Soviet Union's new approach to the United Nations, which is intended to make the Organization into an effective centre for co-ordinating the practical actions of States and to use the prestige and potential of the United Nations in the interests of strengthening world peace, security and international co-operation in all their aspects in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.

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It is vital to increase the contribution made by the United Nations to the process of disarmament, to rid this area of fruitless rhetorical elements and move irreversibly towards a search for universally acceptable solutions on the basis of a balance of the interests of States.

The only way to do this is to increase the output and rationalize the work of all parts of the United Nations disarmament machinery, not least the Disarmament Commission. The Soviet Union welcomed the consensus adoption of General Assembly resolution 44/119 C on rationalizing the work of the Commission. Inter alia, it will be necessary to implement, beginning in 1991, the decision to limit the Commission's working agenda to four items in order to make its functioning more efficient.

We hope that at the present session we shall realize the potential for increasing the degree of agreement among States both with respect to new conceptual approaches to military and political security and with respect to the potential for implementing practical proposals to make the disarmament process an international one.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): Permit me at the outset, Sir, to convey to you the sincere congratulations of the Austrian delegation on your assignment as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. Your election is a tribute to your professional experience and ability in the field of disarmament. It is also a well-deserved compliment to the delegation of Indonesia, which has over the years always contributed in a very active and fruitful manner to the work of the various disarmament bodies. I wish also to congratulate the other officers of the Commission and the Chairmen of its subsidiary bodies. Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, of the full co-operation and support of the Austrian delegation.

In the months of October and November 1989, during the debates in the General Assembly's First Committee, many speakers paid tribute to the changes in the international political climate, the improved East-West-relations and the reforms which had been carefully initiated in particular in some Eastern European countries. The situation was commonly praised as one of fundamental change, hopefully giving way to a reduction of old antagonisms and therefore leading to real disarmament undertakings.

But nobody had foreseen or even imagined those fundamental and profound political earthquakes in the Eastern European countries which took place towards the end of 1989. Europe is no longer the same as it was only six or seven months ago. The events which took place shaped a number of countries completely anew and provided for a situation in no way comparable to the past one. Those changes have deeply affected the status of the relations between the two super-Powers, their respective alliances and the East-West relationship as a whole, thereby of course improving not only the European security situation but also the global one.

The world witnessed changes which can really be described as historic, because they gave momentum to the replacement of a confrontational system by a more co-operative approach. An elaborated and definite new system of international

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relations has not yet been set up, since there are new orientations to be found, a process of reforms being still well under way. But it already seems clear that the new climate will be one of better co-operation and of integration.

Austria is therefore convinced that, with regard to the recent tremendously positive changes in international relations, a new quality in multilateral diplomacy must be found. This holds true in particular for the field of disarmament; the improvements in the security situation have to be accompanied by corresponding arms reduction measures. Of course, it is very difficult to evaluate what has happened and to assess the possible further outcomes correctly, but we must not lose sight of the new possibilities or decouple ourselves from the events taking place outside our meeting rooms. Looking at the disarmament agenda, we find many items and initiatives which bear the sign of the East-West confrontation. The East-West conflict has been the main promoter of the arms race, but is now in the process of fading out.

Hence, we should be bold; we should take advantage of the emerging opportunities we did not anticipate; we should try to end confrontational issues and concentrate on promising ones, on issues which are forward-looking and carry good prospects for the future.

I have concentrated so far on the ongoing changes on the European continent, which definitely have an impact on the global security situation. But we must not overlook the fact - and I put very much emphasis on this - that not all regional conflicts are to be seen in the East-West context. The old antagonism between East and West is not always a reason for or condition of - is often not even an element of - the situation prevailing in other parts of the globe. It would hence be a big mistake to believe that an improved relationship between Western and Eastern countries would automatically have a positive influence on the whole world. The

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reasons and underlying causes for various regional problems in other continents are manifold and distinct from the causes of the former East-West conflict. In order to achieve an improvement of the security situation and to reach disarmament there, we have to look for solutions which correspond to the respective regional situations.

On the other hand, it is the firm belief of the Austrian delegation that the international community should benefit from the increased international confidence and co-operation. The international climate is certainly favourable for the achievement of genuine disarmament in various fields. We should not let this situation of opportunities go, in particular with regard to the work to be done in the framework of the Disarmament Commission.

The 1989 substantive session of our Commission was very disappointing. It came to an end with almost no outcome at all. In some fields we did not succeed in making even the smallest movement, although a compromise seemed so close. In other areas the results were so limited that one could doubt the usefulness of spending days and weeks discussing the issues.

As last year's session was almost completely lost for the Disarmament Commission and hence for the multilateral deliberative process in disarmament, many delegations - including the Austrian - raised the point that a reform of its methods of work could have a positive effect on the results of its sessions. An open-ended informal group as proposed by the Austrian delegation was convened by the Chairman, and it invested a considerable amount of time and personal resources to elaborate a comprehensive reform package which was taken note of in General Assembly resolution 44/119 C. In this context, the Austrian delegation would commend the Commission's previous Chairman, Ambassador Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya of Zaire, its Secretary, Mr. Lin Kuo-chung, and his staff, and all delegations

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participating, for their endeavours. The new structure of work will be effective as of 1991, and Austria is convinced that the measures agreed upon will enhance the role of the Commission and contribute to more substantive results of its work.

Paragraph 3 (5) of the paper on the subject stresses that the Commission should if possible conclude its consideration of the old agenda items during the 1990 session. We therefore hope that we shall be able to achieve progress on as many items as possible and that we can finalize and adopt recommendations or sets of principles on the various items.

Having made those general remarks, let me now comment upon the specific items on the agenda.

The first substantive item deals with nuclear disarmament. Given the enormous threat of nuclear weapons to all of us, and given the tremendous impact the use of such weapons would have, it is obvious that questions related to nuclear-arms reduction must have top priority in the multilateral disarmament discussion.

True, the international community was and continues to be very satisfied by the signing and the ongoing implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - which was the first real nuclear disarmament step. But this can only be a starting-point from which other genuine disarmament measures have to be launched. We note with great interest the work the super-Powers did in order to prepare a treaty cutting their strategic arsenals by half. We are encouraged by the spirit of understanding and compromise which obviously guided the difficult and delicate negotiations and which helped to solve many of the outstanding problems. We very much look forward to the possible signing of this so-called START treaty during the forthcoming summit meeting scheduled to take place later this month.

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On the other hand, we must not forget the fact that START will cover only a segment of the overall arsenal of strategic weapons. There are still others - for example, air-launched nuclear bombs or sea-launched cruise missiles - which are not contained in the forthcoming agreement. That is why we remain convinced that after a successful conclusion of the START treaty questions with regard to the remainder of the category of strategic nuclear weapons have to be addressed as well.

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Furthermore, Austria was and is convinced that the question of tactical nuclear weapons also must be looked at more intensively and that progress in this field must be reached. In the light of the changes in the international situation already mentioned, in particular those in Europe, we are even more firmly convinced that security will be enhanced by a steadily decreasing level of tactical nuclear arms. We are encouraged by recent signs that new thinking with regard to tactical nuclear forces is emerging on the part of the nuclear Powers and their alliances.

Coming back to the work of the Disarmament Commission, we have before us two sets of draft principles being elaborated since the item was inserted in the Commission's agenda in 1979. During last year's session some progress was made with regard to the formulation of a number of paragraphs. Taking into consideration the time and resources absorbed we must, however, concede that the outcome was rather limited. We therefore think that this year's endeavours should bring about more results and that the text of the recommendations will, as is hoped, be finalized.

The same holds true for the item on South Africa's nuclear capability. Although the discussions at last year's session took place in an open-minded and co-operative atmosphere, very little progress was made. Since this item has been on the Commission's agenda for more than a decade, we hope that the text of a recommendation may be agreed upon very soon.

It was particularly regrettable to the Austrian delegation that in 1989 no major achievements were recorded on the item dealing with the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We attach the utmost importance to the multilateral disarmament work done within the framework of the United Nations system. We believe that the machinery of the Organization in general and of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in particular should be strengthened. We

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therefore hope that it will be possible to find common ground and universally acceptable language.

One of the questions which deserve accurate attention is the problem of naval armaments and disarmament. Taking fully into consideration the specifics of this category of weaponry and the very sophisticated problems related to possible naval disarmament endeavours, we believe that the Commission should find a way to address the item in the right manner, to discuss it in an open-minded and constructive spirit and to arrive at a common denominator.

Nuclear disarmament has, as has been rightly stated so many times, the highest priority in the international disarmament agenda. On the other hand we must not forget that about 80 per cent of global military expenditures are used for conventional weapons and that since the end of the Second World War more than 17 million people have been killed in conflicts and wars fought with conventional weapons. Those facts demonstrate the high importance of conventional disarmament measures. My country has always paid great attention to the conventional field, stressing the interaction between nuclear and conventional disarmament efforts. Austria remains convinced that conventional disarmament must be looked at more closely in the various multilateral bodies, in particular within the United Nations system, where conventional arms control unfortunately plays, so far, only a minor role. Concentration on only one of the various segments of disarmament - which is a comprehensive undertaking - will in the long run not lead to substantial and substantive outcomes.

Austria is honoured to be the host country of a twofold set of negotiations within the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). In the negotiations on conventional forces in Europe - the so-called CFE talks - the 23 member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Treaty undertake to achieve more stability through an equilibrium of

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conventional armaments on a lower level. After a dynamic start to these talks, considerable progress was reached through the businesslike attitude, the flexibility and the sincere political will demonstrated by all participants. A basis has been laid for the elimination of the conventional imbalances in the whole of Europe and for the ruling-out of the feasibility of making large-scale surprise operations or surprise attacks. The sixth round of the CFE talks, concluded only a few days ago, was also governed by a spirit of co-operation. However, agreement on some of the most important issues has not yet been reached. Nevertheless we hope that a first CFE agreement can be signed at the summit meeting of the CSCE countries which is scheduled to take place in the fall of this year.

The second set of negotiations, on confidence- and security-building measures, concentrates on a refinement of the Stockholm confidence- and security-building measures agreed upon in 1986 and on the elaboration of a new, third, generation of those measures. It has proved that such measures can have an extremely precious role in the promotion of international understanding, mutual confidence and, hence, in disarmament efforts. The 35 CSCE countries which are participating in the talks on confidence- and security-buiding measures hope that an agreement will be signed at the summit meeting later this year. In particular, the areas of exchange of information, communication and consultation mechanisms seem to be ready for accord to be reached rather soon. Negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures could be continued after the summit meeting; further measures, for example constraining ones, should then be elaborated.

Conventional disarmament has been discussed in the Disarmament Commission for the last three years. In the light of the great importance so many States - including my own - attach to this matter, and compared with the time and human energy consumed, the achievements have been trifling. We feel that this Commission

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

should multiply its efforts in order to arrive at a substantial outcome on this sensitive matter, which is of concern to all of us.

General Assembly resolution 44/116 N has given us the mandate to address also questions of international arms transfers in the context of conventional disarmament. This important problem should be tackled accurately, taking into particular account the necessity of making a distinction between legal trade in arms and illegal trafficking in weaponry.

With regard to the item entitled "Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade", the Commission had before it several proposals and working papers last year. However, it did not find common ground and could not fulfil the mandate given to it by the forty-third session of the General Assembly. Maybe some of the texts presented were too ambitious; maybe a number of delegations were disappointed by the outcome of the first two disarmament decades. In the light of the various proposals made, my delegation is confident that a balanced and forward-looking declaration can be agreed upon at this session.

General Assembly resolution 44/116 E entrusted us with taking up the matter of objective information on military matters and dealing with this new subject. The Disarmament Commission has decided to establish a consultation group for this year's discussion of the item and has entrusted me with the chairmanship of that group. I should like to thank all delegations for their confidence. I will certainly do my very best in order to lead our deliberations in a good spirit of mutual respect and understanding, where everybody will have ample opportunity to express his opinions and convictions on the issue.

I do not want to go too much into details at this stage but my delegation will make its comments in due course during the exchange of views we are going to have in the consultation group.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

As I said earlier, the world is now facing a process of change and new situations which should help us to find the right spirit of co-operation and compromise in our multilateral disarmament efforts. Since our task has a bearing on peace and security, the Austrian delegation hopes that the Disarmament Commission will be able to achieve genuine progress during this substantive session.

Ms. MASON (Canada): On behalf of the Canadian delegation, I am very pleased, Sir, to extend to you my warmest congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. Canada looks forward to working with you, as well as with all delegations, to achieve positive results over the next three weeks. I should also like to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya of Zaire for his effective leadership, both at last year's substantive session and in consultations last fall on enhancing the effectiveness of the Disarmament Commission.

The past year has been characterized by dramatic changes which, for the most part, have had a favourable influence on relations among States. Long-standing tensions and rivalries have subsided and in their place we welcome the emergence of a renewed spirit of co-operation. This trend has positively affected all aspects of international relations, including, of course, the areas of arms control and disarmament.

The various negotiations currently taking place are addressing a wide range of international security and disarmament issues, including some of the highest priorities of Canada and, I believe, the world community in general. None of these negotiations is an easy exercise; however, despite this, substantial progress is being made on several fronts. This can be attributed to the constructive approach and commitment of many States and their respective representatives to translate the improved international political climate into concrete measures that will strengthen international security at reduced levels of armament.

In the context of bilateral negotiations, we commend the United States and the Soviet Union for the serious manner in which they have pursued efforts towards an agreement on strategic arms reduction talks (START). Their work has succeeded in overcoming many hurdles. Canada urges both countries to persevere in their negotiations with a view to resolving any outstanding technical issues in order

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

that a START agreement will be concluded by the upcoming summit in Washington. We also welcome the progress registered at the bilateral level on chemical weapons and in the nuclear-testing talks; we look forward to the ratification in the near future of the threshold test-ban treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions treaty. Following that important achievement, we encourage both sides to consider further restrictions on testing that may be negotiated.

In the multilateral context, we are particularly pleased at the progress that has been made by members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Warsaw Pact alliances in Vienna in working to conclude the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE). Canada shares the objective in those negotiations of the enhancement of security through the establishment of a stable balance of conventional armed forces at lower levels. We are calling for measures that, if implemented, would result in massive cuts in the conventional armed forces deployed in the Atlantic-to-the-Urals zone.

In an effort to expand the existing régime of confidence- and security-building measures, Canada has also joined with negotiators of the other 34 States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in negotiating in Vienna a new agreement on confidence- and security-building measures. Both the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe and the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures are, in our view, proceeding well. However, great flexibility and creativity will be required by all if agreements are to be reached this year, and in time for a full CSCE summit. We commend the pragmatic and forthcoming approach to these negotiations which has been shown by negotiators to date, and encourage all to move forward quickly, in a spirit of compromise and goodwill.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

(spoke in French)

Work at the Conference on Disarmament on a chemical weapons convention has been unremitting. I commend the delegations for the dedication and perseverance they have demonstrated in further developing and improving what is already a complex, detailed, but nevertheless attainable, treaty text. I hope that the concrete results already obtained on technical questions will be complemented by political will; unfortunately, that political will is still lacking in certain aspects. The bilateral United States-Soviet Union agreement on chemical weapons destruction, which we expect to see signed this year, will provide us all with concrete proof that, given sufficient will, chemical weapons can be destroyed. We applaud such determination.

However, at the same time, a disturbing shadow looms over the chemical disarmament scene. Claims and boasts of chemical weapons prowess are not ingredients for stability. They are out of step with the encouraging developments I have just described. They create anxieties among peoples, which can only act as a spur to ever-more strident responses.

(continued in English)

While the international community looks forward with anticipation to the conclusion of agreements in these areas, our attention is also focused this year on a treaty which has been in effect for 20 years and which will be reviewed at a conference a few months from now. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which counts among its parties the overwhelming majority of States, exemplifies the positive contribution to international security that global multilateral negotiations can make. Canada has actively participated in the preparatory process towards the Fourth Review Conference, and we are confident that the constructive approach demonstrated by all Members will result in a very positive outcome to that meeting.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

At the United Nations, Canada is pleased with the continuing trend towards more constructive and co-operative consideration of disarmament issues. This favourable climate permeated the 1989 session of the First Committee and is reflected in the constructive work currently being undertaken by the various experts groups, including that dealing with the United Nations role in verification, chaired by a Canadian. It is our hope that the work of the United Nations in Disarmament will continue to be stimulated by the progress being registered in the areas I have mentioned, and indeed contribute to further success in these negotiations.

I wish to turn now to the Disarmament Commission itself. Canada regards this Commission as a useful institution and believes it has the potential to play a unique and constructive role in giving in-depth consideration to specific problems with a view to forging common approaches and consensus recommendations. The Commission has, in fact, demonstrated its usefulness, which can be seen in the results of some of the items that it has concluded over the years.

However, despite certain successes, we have experienced a growing concern in recent years that the Disarmament Commission is failing to make the best use of its limited time and resources. At last year's substantive session, in particular, Canada was disappointed to note that no item was concluded and that progress on several items was only marginal; and this, despite the laudable efforts of the Chairman and of numerous delegations from all groups.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

Our concerns about the effectiveness of the Disarmament Commission are, of course, shared by many other delegations, and we welcomed the efforts last fall to consider reforms that would revitalize the Commission. The fruit of this process, the document entitled, "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission", in our view represents an excellent set of guidelines which will make an important contribution towards overcoming some of the organizational difficulties that have in recent years stifled the progress of the Commission's work. We hope that all delegations will make every effort to implement the principles included in this document, in the interest of enhancing the role of the Disarmament Commission. This includes, of course, concluding all of the items on this year's working agenda, with the exception of the one new item.

Over the next three weeks the Disarmament Commission will consider seven substantive items which together encompass a broad range of important disarmament issues. I wish to comment briefly on some of these items.

Item 8 on conventional disarmament, is an important one, in our view, and can be expected to assume a higher profile and to require intense and prolonged discussion. This has been a contentious issue in the Disarmament Commission; however, expectations of progress in this area - in the confidence- and security-building measures and conventional forces in Europe negotiations taking place in Vienna - assign this subject, in our view, an even greater importance. There is a need for greater flexibility and imagination this year on the part of all participants in order to reach a consensus on recommendations which will seek to take advantage of developing opportunities in the field of conventional arms control and disarmament. It may also be useful to examine carefully the possibility that there is some applicability for already developed and tested confidence-building measures in regions outside of Europe. In this regard, I noted with interest the comments here yesterday of my colleague from Japan.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

On agenda item 7 concerning naval armaments and disarmament, Canada remains open-minded. We consider the issue of naval confidence-building measures as a potentially beneficial focus for discussion, and we look forward to a consideration of naval arms questions that will allow us to explore concerns on the subject.

Item 4, which includes nuclear disarmament and a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament, is extremely broad, covering a vast range of contemporary disarmament issues. It is no surprise that consideration of this item has proved difficult in light of the fact that a number of the issues at hand have evaded both consensus at the General Assembly and negotiated conclusion at the Conference on Disarmament for years. My delegation believes that flexibility and realism must be demonstrated by all if a meaningful, consensus text is to be reached under this item. While parts of the text inevitably will have to remain at the general level if consensus is to be reached, some components included under item 4 may merit more focused consideration by the Disarmament Commission as items in their own right at some future date.

Canada was one of the sponsors of the resolution adopted at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly which requested the Disarmament Commission to include an item concerning objective information on military matters in the agenda of its 1990 session. My Government firmly supports greater openness and transparency on military matters as an important means of increasing confidence among States. This is reflected, for example, in Canada's strong support for the concept of "open skies". We hope to see an "open skies" régime established among the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact in the near future and believe that this concept merits careful consideration as a confidence-building measure which might be implemented in other parts of the world. My delegation looks forward to preliminary discussion of objective

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

information on military matters at this session and in-depth consideration at next year's substantive session of the Disarmament Commission.

Canada will, of course, follow with interest and participate constructively in the other important items on our agenda.

The work-load before this session of the Disarmament Commission is great and our time resources very limited. As a result, our deliberations must be conducted in a businesslike manner and we must attempt, as far as possible, to avoid the tendency of rehashing well-known positions and re-enacting disagreements of past sessions. Canada regards the current session as a particularly crucial one that has the potential to inject a renewed spirit of co-operation into our work and to enhance the relevance of the Commission to the multilateral disarmament agenda. My delegation is convinced that these goals are within our reach and looks forward to co-operating with all others in pursuit of them.

Mr. ORDONEZ (Philippines): On behalf of the Philippine delegation I wish to extend to you, Sir, my warm felicitations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission this year. The bonds of friendship between our two countries, and, indeed, our common historical and cultural roots, are well known. We share in the pride of our neighbours that a representative of a country member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been given the important responsibility of leading the 1990 session of the Disarmament Commission. Your election is recognition of both Indonesia's manifest role in the field of disarmament and of your myriad personal diplomatic abilities and wide-ranging experience. May I therefore pledge our utmost confidence in and support for you, Sir. Under your leadership, we may be able to finalize the valuable work of your predecessors in cutting the Gordian knot impeding the work of the Commission.

(Mr. Ordoñez, Philippines)

On 22 April this year, we observed the twentieth anniversary of Earth Day. This was celebrated in various ways throughout the world - from Rizal Park in Manila to Central Park in New York City, from various city squares in the world to Times Square. The 20 years that have passed since the first Earth Day have shown a heightened public awareness of the importance of the environment.

No longer can certain things be taken for granted - clean water, fresh air, the automatic replenishment of nature's resources. Indeed, the best things in life - as the song goes - are not free. Too many man-made disasters and catastrophes occurred in the interim for peoples and nations to remain ignorant or silent on this issue. Today, such terms as "acid rain", "the depletion of the ozone layer", "the greenhouse effect", "nuclear pollution" and "oil slick" are commonplace even for grade-schoolers - which is not to say that we have gone a long way towards solving such problems.

In a sense, Earth Day was also a birthday. It was a moment at which the global consciousness of man was made evident, similar to such events as the world-wide viewing of man's first step on the moon or the heroic international effort to raise funds for the starving through the Live-Aid Concerts.

As we can see, almost nothing in the world today can occur without affecting some other part of the world, or at least eliciting a reaction from citizens of other countries. We are still caught up with the significance of many recent political and social transformations, and every day we avidly read the newspapers for this or that development because we know how important all this is for all mankind.

In Filipino, we have a saying that the ills and aches of one finger are also those of the other fingers and of the entire hand - an expression which rings true not only in South-East Asia but everywhere.

(Mr. Ordoñez, Philippines)

Earth Day should remind us in the Disarmament Commission that we are all affected by the same negative effects of militarization and the arms race. Indeed, we should ponder on how these have affected the environment in the past four and a half decades.

Similarly, our work in the Commission in a very true sense affects the well-being of people everywhere. While events in the world are speeding at the rate of nanoseconds, we in the Disarmament Commission seem sometimes to be going at a snail's pace. Too long have we allowed cobwebs and dust to collect around certain issues. Today's times require more boldness and daring.

We welcome the moves to reform the procedures of the Disarmament Commission, as was expressed through the unanimous adoption of General Assembly resolution 44/119 C. Indeed, the Philippines not only supported all of the resolutions touching on the work of the Disarmament Commission, it also participated in the informal effort spearheaded by various parties to streamline the work of the Commission.

Hence, we strongly support the move, as is reflected in paragraph 5 under heading 3 of the annex to resolution 44/119 C, that:

> "At its 1990 session, the Commission should make every effort to conclude all its agenda items, except the new substantive items." (resolution 44/119 C, annex)

There are those who may argue that we merely debate issues in the Commission, that the all-important task of multilateral negotiation belongs to that exclusive body in Geneva, the Conference on Disarmament. We vigorously support the highly significant role of the Conference on Disarmament. We wish to emphasize that the Disarmament Commission - in which most of our 160 nations participate - best represents the views of that long-suffering majority: the victims of all conflicts since the Second World War.

(Mr. Ordoñez, Philippines)

That is all the more reason to point out the urgency of our tasks, among which are: to mirror people's desire to end the arms race; to represent the views of laymen in effectively eliminating the danger of nuclear war; to monitor the spread of conventional arms; and, at a historic juncture, to halt the perilous trend towards extending the arms race to other regions, the seas and outer space. How can we best achieve those aims?

In the area of reform, we agree with the following proposed substantive measures as embodied in document A/CN.10/137. We must separate the agenda into a general and a working agenda; limit the working agenda of each annual session to a maximum of four substantive items, and thus limit the number of subsidiary bodies to four at each annual session; beginning in 1991, not retain a subject on the working agenda for more than three consecutive years; and, when consensus is not possible, require suspension of a subject by a joint statement or a chairman's summary reflecting the divergent views.

We believe that the Philippines is not alone when it says that, with the current working procedures of the Disarmament Commission, it is well-nigh impossible for any but the largest delegations to monitor all the issues thoroughly. Too often in past sessions we have caught ourselves rushing from conference room to conference room simply to keep track of simultaneous ongoing discussions. We too have been in need of our own form of perestroika.

We have seen how measures of reform - such as clustering of items and adapting a more flexible mix of general and particular statements in the First Committee - have sharpened the cutting edge of such bodies. That should lead us to reflect on how we could best maximize our time in the Disarmament Commission.

In that context, we reiterate that we should push forward with the resolution to declare the 1990s the Third Disarmament Decade. In past sessions, we have quibbled over the question of when the 1990s began and ended. The 1990s are

(Mr. Ordoñez, Philippines)

now upon us, and it is incumbent upon us to do something about the Declaration. As our contribution to the new decade, we should have brought our review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament to an effective conclusion by this year.

It would be an error to assume that in the new climate of dialogue we have already solved the problem of nuclear disarmament. The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty) was simply the first step in a long, arduous journey toward the goal of "general and complete disarmament under effective international control" expressed at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. While it was an effective first step, the INF Treaty simply did away with about 3 per cent of all existing nuclear weapons. Even with the proposed 50 per cent cut in strategic nuclear weapons, we will still be threatened by more nuclear weapons than those extant at the signing of the partial test-ban Treaty in 1963.

We are still faced with many dangerous slips, turns and curves on the road to disarmament. This year alone, we have before us the challenging task of two major conferences - the fourth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the beginning of the Amendment Conference to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, the latter to commence after the Disarmament Commission meeting this year. The fourth Review Conference will face an infinitely more complicated situation than previous ones. On the one hand, there are more nuclear-threshold countries today than ever before; on the other, those who have adhered to the non-proliferation Treaty will - with justice - remind the nuclear-weapon States of their promise in article VI to:

(Mr. Ordoñez, Philippines)

"Pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

In addition, we are dealing today with much more sophisticated weapons and technology than in the past.

We must not count our peace dividends before they hatch. While we applaud the super-Powers' spirit of rapprochement and concern for each other's problems, we cannot assume that therefore complete nuclear disarmament has already taken place or that mankind is no longer threatened by nuclear weapons. Already, we note that there has been a tendency in recent conferences to downplay the importance of disarmament, as if that problem had already been solved.

The fact that the disarmament issue is now seemingly dominated by the USSR and the United States does not imply that the rest of the world should blithely stand idle and allow the two super-Powers to take the disarmament initiatives and decisions by themselves. We should not act as a mere audience viewing the dramatis personae on stage. While there are no nuclear weapons to get rid of in the small countries that constitute the audience, still the ongoing dialogue of the super-Powers is of immediate concern. In the final analysis, it is our own welfare, our own future, our very own existence that will be affected by the deliberations and decisions of the nuclear Powers. It was world public opinion and discussion in the United Nations that prompted the super-Powers to restrain their plunge toward an unlimited arms race. It will likewise be world public opinion that will prompt the super-Powers to more sobriety on the subject of nuclear arms.

As the debtor countries, literally the victims of the operation of inexorable economic laws, have shown that their collective concern about external debt could heighten the humanism of creditor countries, so can we - the likely victims of an

(Mr. Ordoñez, Philippines)

uncontrolled race for weapons superiority - heighten the realization of the super-Powers that mutually assured destruction is not a wise course for mankind. We have a profound stake in the future of disarmament. We can justly address the super-Powers in this manner: "Sirs, it is our life and our future that you are deliberating upon". It is on that note that I sound an appeal to all Member States of the United Nations to seek multilateral disarmament relentlessly. We should not be a passive audience. We must be activists in the shaping of our own future.

Experts have noted that the distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons is now being blurred. In that connection, we look forward to the completion of the updating of the study on nuclear weapons by the Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General. We believe that such a study will have to take into account the new developments that have occurred within the past half-year. With the imminent proliferation of long-range ballistic missiles, it is now possible to deliver conventional, chemical and biological weapons that might be as deadly as some nuclear weapons. We might point out that even during the Second World War as many people perished from the fire-bombing as did from the nuclear weapons exploded over Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It is a matter of concern to us that, despite worldwide concern about chemical weapons, a multilateral treaty banning such weapons has not yet been realized. It is also necessary that the Treaty prohibiting biological weapons should be respected and further expanded to close all loopholes.

We would welcome the early conclusion of studies on arms transfers and verification, since that would obviously aid us in the field of conventional weapons as well. The new spirit of openness should be embraced by other nations also.

(Mr. Ordoñez, Philippines)

As a country in the South-East Asia region and situated in the vital Asia-Pacific region, the Philippines is concerned at the possibility that the arms race could spread to our area. For that reason, the Philippines urges that the question of naval disarmament should be dealt within the parameters agreed on in this Commission.

It may be necessary in the future to hold a continuing dialogue on the question of Asian-Pacific international peace and security, which thus far has been discussed mainly in academic institutions and non-governmental forums. That could serve to balance out the rapid changes now taking place in Europe.

Recalling the Filipino simile referred to earlier, the Disarmament Commission this year can either open its hand and let an opportunity dribble away, or it can clutch it into a tight, effective fist to counter some of man's worst ills.

In the course of our session, three events in the host country of the United Nations will be honoured: Armed Forces Day on May 19, Memorial Day on May 28 and Mothers' Day on May 13. The first two events recall the memory of past conflicts, the last reminds us of birth and rebirth. The original mother, as we all know, was Mother Earth, whom we celebrated with the advent of spring. May the work done at the 1990 session of the Disarmament Commission make Mothers' Day the most significant day of that triad in the future.

Mr. NEAGU (Romania): Sir, please accept the sincere congratulations of the Romanian delegation on your election as Chairman of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. With you in the Chair we are confident that our deliberations will meet with success. Our congratulations also go to the other officers of the Commission.

Romania is participating in a general exchange of views on disarmament issues for the first time since the victory of the Revolution of December 1989.

Romania's position on the burning issues of curbing the arms race and disarmament grows out of the very nature of the Romanian Revolution, which brought about not merely a change of Government but the overthrow of the Government and a change in the very social and political system of the country. The particularly brutal dictatorship of a single man and his clan led to particularly tense popular discontent which, when it exploded, instantly removed all the socio-political structures of the totalitarian régime. The old oppressive rules and laws were replaced by new and democratic ones. As a result Romania today has a most liberal legislation.

A natural consequence of the Revolution is Romania's new foreign policy, which is firmly aimed at promoting broad and active co-operation with all nations and at securing peace, achieving disarmament and strengthening international security.

At the outset I should like to stress that Romania is firmly committed to the goal of disarmament, both nuclear and conventional.

With respect to the conducting of negotiations to attain that goal, Romania stands for a comprehensive approach and the adoption of concrete measures for all problems, without linking results in one area of disarmament to progress in another. At the same time we consider that in such negotiations it is necessary to show flexibility, a spirit of compromise, realism and pragmatism.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

I should like to dwell for a few moments on agenda item 4, on the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament.

Although nuclear disarmament is a responsibility incumbent upon all States possessing such weapons, we believe that non-nuclear-weapon States have not only the right but also the obligation to their own nations and to the whole world to contribute to efforts aimed at accelerating and finalizing the respective negotiations.

Certainly a radical solution to the problem would be the total elimination of nuclear weapons. However, that objective can be achieved only through progressive measures. We therefore consider that at the present stage efforts should be concentrated on speeding up the conclusion of the agreement on a 50-per-cent reduction in offensive strategic weapons, with negotiations being continued afterwards with a view to eliminating all nuclear arsenals.

Romania will faithfully fulfil all obligations assumed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the safeguards agreement concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency, and it will strive to strengthen and expand the non-proliferation régime.

At the same time we insist that the nuclear-weapon States intensify their efforts to reach an agreement - which might be a partial one at the beginning - on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. That problem should be given the greatest attention at the forthcoming Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We take a similar approach with regard to the question of chemical weapons. In our view the prevention of the proliferation of such weapons, accompanied by efforts to conclude as soon as possible a convention on the complete banning and destruction of chemical weapons, is an essential component of a safer world.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

We hope that the successful completion of the American-Soviet talks on the matter will speed up the conclusion of the international convention on the prohibition and destruction of all chemical weapons. The conclusion of the convention should remain a matter of high priority at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

In the context of the efforts undertaken in the field of disarmament the two sets of negotiations taking place at Vienna - the negotiations between the 23 States members of the Warsaw Pact and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the negotiations among the 35 countries participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) - are of particular importance.

The achievement of the objectives of the 23-country negotiations to reduce tensions, ensure military balance at a lower level and prevent surprise attack, as well as to increase transparency and predictability in the military field, would lead to the strengthening of stability and security on the continent and open the way to new agreements, including agreements on tactical nuclear weapons.

We believe that the problems under discussion in the negotiations on conventional armed forces have been sufficiently clarified and that that forum is in a position to proceed rapidly to the finalization of the text of a treaty. We expect that treaty to be concluded before the end of this year. It is with that aim in mind that the Romanian delegation will participate in the next round of the negotiations.

In the same spirit the Romanian delegation has a mandate to act at the CSCE negotiations among 35 countries to work out a first set of new concrete confidence- and security-building measures in Europe. Both texts could thus be adopted at the summit meeting of the CSCE countries planned to take place towards the end of this year.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

In the perspective of the second Helsinki Conference in 1992, the two negotiating forums could be united, thus achieving the objective of dealing with the problems of security and disarmament in Europe with the participation of all European countries, the United States and Canada.

A positive conclusion to the "open skies" conference would have a similar significance. We see the open-skies régime as a measure that will increase confidence among the participating States and facilitate the verification of the agreements reached in the field of disarmament.

Romania takes a positive approach to naval armaments and disarmament.

A major concern for Romania is recovery for its national economy and raising the living standard of its people. We are therefore especially interested in the adoption of concrete agreements on the reduction of military expenditures and use of the funds thus saved for development purposes.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

The adoption of such concrete measures will be greatly facilitated by the utilization by an increasing number of States of the United Nations system for reporting military expenditures.

In conclusion, I should like to express the determination of the Romanian Government to contribute actively, in all negotiations in which it participates, to efforts aimed at making further progress to strengthen confidence and security and to promote disarmament.

Mr. DUARTE (Brazil): Allow me, Sir, to join others in congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. Your commitment to the cause of disarmament is a valuable asset we call count upon to bring this session to a fruitful outcome. Let me add as a personal note that it is a pleasure and an honour to have worked with you and other members of the delegation of Indonesia during my previous association with multilateral disarmament efforts. My congratulations go also to the officers who will assist you during this session. Let me assure you that the Brazilian delegation is ready to give you its full co-operation and support.

Let me also commend the work of your predecessor, Ambassador Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya of Zaire. Under his able and experienced guidance we agreed on the set of provisions to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission, adopted by the Commission and contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 44/119 C.

Most of the provisions contained in that annex were supported by my delegation. In fact, may I recall that they stem directly from resolution 37/78 H, adopted several years ago at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Brazil was among the sponsors of that resolution, together with several non-aligned, neutral and other delegations. We are glad now to note that those early efforts at rationalization have borne fruit. The stipulations of the annex

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

to last year's resolution 44/119 C merit our support in so far as they can contribute to rationalizing our proceedings; they should improve the ability of the Commission to make specific substantive recommendations on the issues under its consideration. The joint statements or chairmen's reports to be included in the report of the Commission should not be viewed as a mere device "to report out" some controversial items, but as a contribution to their consideration again in the future.

We should keep clearly in mind that what lies at the origin of this effort to revitalize the Disarmament Commission is the general sentiment of frustration with the meagre results of its past work. The Disarmament Commission was conceived by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament as a universal deliberative body on disarmament entrusted with the task of undertaking in-depth consideration of disarmament issues and of providing guidelines and recommendations on those issues. Its intended role is intimately related to the role of the Conference on Disarmament, the sole negotiating body in the field of multilateral disarmament.

Over the years since its first substantive session in 1979 the Commission has been able to conclude consideration of some issues on its agenda. On others, particularly the priority issues, progress has been very limited and the situation was that of a near-standstill. While part of the blame for this situation could be attributed to shortcomings in the organization and method of our work, the main barrier to real progress in the consideration of disarmament issues in the Disarmament Commission has to do with the lack of political will.

With the strengthening of the Disarmament Commission, our commitment should not therefore be limited to the organizational aspects; there should also be a political commitment to enhance the role of multilateralism in the field of disarmament. Let me state once again in this context the three main ideas which my

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

delegation put forward last year before this Commission on the ways and means that could enhance the role of multilateralism in disarmament and in particular the specific role of the Disarmament Commission.

First, the United Nations is entitled to provide the necessary impetus for the implementation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament along the lines set forth in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. We should explore to the fullest possible extent the potentialities both of the Disarmament Commission, which is the United Nations deliberative body on disarmament, and of its sole permanent negotiating body, the Conference on Disarmament.

Secondly, the agenda of multilateral disarmament forums should be set strictly in line with prevailing universal concerns and interests. While acknowledging the need for progress in all areas, we believe that focus, thought and progress should be concentrated on the priority areas as defined in the Final Document, thus avoiding undue attention to collateral subjects. In setting the Disarmament Commission's working agenda for the future, this should be kept clearly in mind.

Finally, we believe that in an international context in which environmental issues are assuming increased relevance, it is high time for special attention to be given to the fact that the possibility of military conflict involving the use of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction undoubtedly poses the gravest threat to the environment.

Those three fundamental concepts should in our view guide the deliberations of this body at this year's session, and should be at the basis of our work beyond that under the new structure provided by the annex to resolution 44/119 C.

For brevity's sake I shall not comment at this stage on the specific items of our present agenda. Brazil's position on each and every one of them is well known, and we shall have the opportunity to make concrete contributions to their discussion in the various subsidiary bodies in the days to come.

Mr. ZARIF (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, Sir, I should like on behalf of my delegation to extend to you my sincere congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. I am pleased to see you, a truly distinguished diplomat from the friendly and brotherly country of Indonesia, presiding over our deliberations. I am confident that with your vast diplomatic skill the Disarmament Commission, in the course of its work at this session, will be able to achieve significant results. I should also like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to your predecessor and to the senior advisers and the Secretary of the Commission.

The prevailing international climate and positive developments in international relations - which have left a remarkable impact on the field of disarmament and which have engendered a general understanding that the Commission should conclude work on all its outstanding substantive items, with the exception of the new ones, during the 1990 session - underline the importance of this session.

(Mr. Zarif, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The role of this deliberating body - to address some important issues relating to global peace and security - can no longer be taken for granted. Thus in the new international climate every effort should be made by all delegations participating in this session, particularly those having nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, to meet the expectations and security concerns of the international community. To achieve those ends, obsolete security doctrines pursued and advocated for decades by big Powers and their selective approach towards international peace and security, which have proved to be futile, should be abandoned. An overall international security system cannot be established unless the security concerns of non-nuclear States - particularly the developing ones - are taken into consideration. Speaking before the Conference on Disarmament on 15 March 1990, the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasized in this regard:

> "What remains as a source of serious concern is the establishment of a new doctrine based solely on the threat perceptions and security requirements of European countries along with the major Powers and without due recognition of the needs and requirements of the developing countries".

In this context, we welcome any comprehensive plan that guarantees collective security of the international system and leads to general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

My delegation attaches great importance to agenda item 4, concerning nuclear disarmament, which represents the most pressing global problem. It is regrettable to have to admit that the Disarmament Commission has registered no noticeable progress on this cardinal item of its work.

The implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - and preliminary understandings between

(Mr. Zarif, Islamic Republic of Iran)

the two super-Powers on a 50-per-cent reduction of their strategic nuclear arsenals should give impetus to multilateralization of the nuclear disarmament process and contribute to putting an end to the arms race, the proliferation of nuclear weapons of all kinds and nuclear testing. These positive developments should also lead to the elimination of all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, whose destructiveness has threatened not only the security of States but also the very survival of mankind.

Despite some encouraging developments regarding a quantitative reduction of nuclear weapons and the slowing down of the arms race between the two super-Powers, there are reports indicating that most of the major nuclear Powers are still involved, in one way or another, in modernizing their nuclear arsenals. In this connection, it should be noted that, according to various reports, strategic arms reduction talks - START - will not eliminate modernization of the super-Powers' arsenals. At the same time, some other reports indicate that the new United States-Soviet Union treaty to reduce strategic nuclear weapons scheduled to be completed and signed in the near future will allow continued deployment of nearly as many United States warheads as now exist. These reports give rise to the concern that genuine vertical and horizontal reduction of nuclear armaments is yet to be implemented, while the international situation, now more than ever, demands the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and general and complete disarmament.

In spite of recent international developments and the relaxation of tension in East-West relations, the situation in the highly sensitive and strategic region of the Middle East has remained volatile as well as dangerous, and the concentration of arms in this region has reached its highest. This mainly stems from unresolved

(Mr. Zarif, Islamic Republic of Iran)

disputes, domineering policies followed by certain regional régimes and the nuclear capability of the occupying Zionist entity, as well as the stockpiling and widespread use of chemical weapons by Iraq.

To alleviate tension, to offset the dangers jeopardizing the security of countries in the region, and to pave the way for the establishment of justice and durable peace in the region, the Islamic Republic of Iran is deeply convinced that immediate confidence-building measures must be adopted. In this context, the immediate implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) in order to put an end to the no-war, no-peace situation between Iran and Iraq is of paramount importance.

Furthermore, international political will must be exercised to achieve the following objectives. The first is the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It should be noted that in 1974 for the first time Iran proposed the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, and the General Assembly has called every year for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. However, unfortunately the Zionist entity, which has developed its nuclear arsenals in collaboration with South Africa and certain other Powers, remains the major obstacle to the realization of this objective.

The second is the establishment of a chemical-weapons-free zone in the Middle East. The widespread use of these inhuman weapons of mass destruction in our region during the recent past obliges the international community to take effective measures to preclude the recurrence of recent tragedies. The early conclusion of the chemical-weapons convention and the scrupulous observance of the commitments made under the 1925 Geneva Protocol, as well as the designation of the Middle East as a chemical-weapons-free zone, are essential first steps in this regard.

(Mr. Zarif, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The third is cessation of any attempt by big Powers to pump up demand for arms in the Middle East. Arms reductions caused by détente in Europe should not lead to the transfer of those weapons to other parts of the world, particularly the Middle East.

Turning to agenda item 7, "Naval armaments and disarmament", my delegation is of the view that confidence-building measures must be extended to the seas and oceans. Continuation of the naval arms race constitutes a major threat to the security and sovereignty of littoral States. Big Powers' naval armaments - particularly those of the United States - have always played an undeniable role in facilitating military action by those Powers against developing countries. It is regrettable that the Disarmament Commission, due to the negative attitude of the United States, has failed to establish a working group on the item with a view to speeding up our deliberations in this respect. However, the Commission at this session should give priority to agenda item 7 and do its utmost to facilitate agreement on it.

As for item 5, concerning the nuclear capability of the racist régime of South Africa, we believe that positive developments in southern Africa, marked by the independence of Namibia, have provided a good opportunity for the Commission to finalize its deliberations on this item. The close economic and technological co-operation between certain Western Powers and the Zionist entity and the Pretoria régime, particularly in the field of nuclear armaments, has played a decisive role in strengthening the racist policies of South Africa. It is incumbent upon those Powers to bring their policies into line with the wish of the international community and fully co-operate with other delegations at this session with a view to achieving effective and concrete results on this item.

(Mr. Zarif, Islamic Republic of Iran)

As regards agenda item 9, the Disarmament Commission will once again have to address the important issue of formulating the appropriate elements for inclusion in the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. In this connection, it may not be necessary to labour the obvious. Nevertheless, it bears repeating that the encouraging developments in the international arena make it all the more imperative that we succeed in forging the elements of a draft declaration in order to give further impetus to that process. Although a great deal of useful and concerted effort was invested in this endeavour last year, the divergence of views on certain issues prevented the Commission from successfully concluding its work on this matter. It is our sincere hope that we shall now be in a position to build on the accomplishments to date, so as to enable the Commission to carry out the mandate entrusted to it.

Mr. GORAJEWSKI (Poland): Let me first of all take this opportunity to express my pleasure at seeing you, Sir, in the Chair at this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. Your experience and skill in the field of disarmament are well known and we look forward to a successful outcome of this session of the Disarmament Commission under your competent leadership.

I would like also to stress the undiminished importance of the Disarmament Commission in the United Nations disarmament machinery as a broad forum for exchanging views on selected disarmament problems and a preliminary stage for negotiations. In this context my delegation wishes to reiterate its commitment to the reform process which has been taking place within the Disarmament Commission. We share the conviction of other delegations that in the wake of these reforms the Commission will be able to act in a more efficient and productive manner.

We have seven substantive items on the agenda this year. Six of them are to be concluded at the current session of the Commission. My delegation believes that, being guided by good will and acting in a spirit of compromise, we will be able to outline a future general agenda and work programme for the Commission.

I should like now to comment briefly on two agenda items, namely, nuclear disarmament and conventional weapons, items 4 and 8 of our agenda respectively.

I am not the first to say that the deliberations in this forum and their outcome so far have been lagging behind the encouraging developments in East-West relations and progress in bilateral Soviet-American disarmament negotiations; therefore, the task of adapting the Disarmament Commission to the requirements of the new times is of paramount importance.

I have in mind first of all the issues of nuclear disarmament - the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the reduction of nuclear arms and a nuclear-test ban. My country attaches great importance to the viability of the non-proliferation régime. The Fourth Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation

(Mr. Gorajewski, Poland)

Treaty, at which a representative of Poland will chair one of the Committees, should be brought to a successful outcome. My country views the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the most important disarmament treaty, with more than 140 participants, and appeals to all States that have not yet done so to adhere to it.

Poland's views on nuclear disarmament are well known. We are looking forward to nuclear disarmament on a global scale and, given my country's location in the centre of Europe, especially in the European region. It is heartening that some elements of the Polish plan on decreasing armaments and increasing confidence in Central Europe have found recognition among the participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). In this respect the Polish Government would particularly welcome an agreement on the elimination of land-based short-range nuclear missiles and nuclear artillery.

Of considerable importance to my country is a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Poland will give its support to every step, bilateral and multilateral, aimed at achieving this goal. In this light my delegation has supported the initiative aimed at the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban régime by amending the partial nuclear-test-ban Treaty. In our view the amendment conference should also serve to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons régime.

Let me now turn to the evolution of the political-military situation in Europe, with special reference to conventional arms reductions. Against the background of the profound changes taking place in Europe and in view of the lessening - if not outright disappearance - of the threat of war in Europe, the role of military forces in European relations is changing.

In a major address on the foreign policy of Poland, delivered in the Polish Parliament on 26 April 1990, Poland's Minister for Foreign Affairs,

(Mr. Gorajewski, Poland)

Professor Krzysztof Skubiszewski noted that

"the role of military force in European politics should be subject to a constant reduction".

The Republic of Poland recognizes the close link of its national security with that of international security. Hence it actively participates in the process of establishing a system of European security, thus lending its support to the efforts to bring to fruition the cause of unity of the European continent. Poland considers the establishment of a system of mutual guarantees and obligations preventing the transformation of various conflicts into war as an important means of averting a war. In the future this system should put an end to the arms race and to the existence of the opposed military alliances in Europe. To quote Minister Skubiszewski's statement once more,

"The all-European system of security will in the long run replace the system of blocs in Europe. We will seek our State's external security precisely within the all-European system".

Last January the Prime Minister of Poland, Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, put forward a proposal for the setting up of a council for European co-operation. According to this proposal, the council for European co-operation would be a permanent political body of the CSCE and would have a consultative and co-ordinative function. The council would review and assess current all-European problems in the field of political, military, economic, humanitarian and environmental co-operation with a view to increasing the effectiveness of CSCE decisions. The council would work towards solving common problems pertaining to the military aspects of security in Europe, including confidence- and security-building measures. One of the council's commissions would deal with political relations and problems of security. Thus our proposal offers an opportunity for co-ordination with the Czech and Slovak initiatives on the creation of a European security commission.

(Mr. Gorajewski, Poland)

Problems of European security touch closely upon the questions of disarmament. Our main goals in this area, as determined in the Seym address by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, are as follows: to bring about the reduction of conventional potentials in Europe as a result of the Vienna negotiations; to start negotiations on tactical nuclear weapons in a group of States concerned; greater openness in military matters, namely, progress in the field of confidence-building measures and methods of verification; participation in Government and non-Government discussions on military doctrines; and negotiations on other disarmament issues, inter alia, on chemical weapons.

My delegation will elaborate on these and other issues in the appropriate working bodies of the Commission.

Mr. SADER (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation wishes to offer you, Sir, our most sincere congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. We also congratulate the other officers of the Commission and of the subsidiary bodies. We know that your talents and experience will lead us to a successful outcome of our work, at a complex session in which we all have special responsibilities to fulfil.

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

This session is being held at a time when the relaxation of the tensions created by the ideological conflicts that have existed between the two great alliances over the past 45 years confronts us with a need to adjust to present-day realities and puts the effectiveness of multilateral disarmament mechanisms to the test.

On the other hand the mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 44/119 C and its annex compels us to work with increased determination and in a pragmatic and constructive spirit towards reaching consensus and completing the consideration of substantive items on our agenda on which we have been unable to reach agreement for several years.

My delegation is aware of those special circumstances and is prepared to collaborate actively to the success of our work.

I should now like to refer briefly to some of the substantive items on the agenda. First, nuclear disarmament: the world appears to have moved out - and let us hope irreversibly - of the era of confrontation and into a new era of dialogue and negotiation. The handling of that crucial and complex transition is a complex task, since the ideological conflict, now becoming a thing of the past, has had certain consequences that continue to pose a direct threat to world peace and security. Perhaps the most visible of those consequences is the continued existence of unreasonably vast nuclear arsenals.

In that connection my delegation is bound to welcome the constant progress being made in the negotiations on nuclear disarmament between the two great Powers, particularly the most recent developments, which augur well for an imminent agreement in the field of short-range land-based missiles in Europe. That progress, however welcome, should not allow us to forget that the bilateral approach, restricted as it is to the chief protagonists, must necessarily

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

eventually yield to another and broader approach if we truly want to achieve a goal consistent with the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

Multilateralism must therefore complement bilateral negotiations, and in my delegation's view it is an essential mechanism for the attainment of complete and general disarmament. My country is, of course, far from being a militarily significant Power, but it is none the less aware of its right and responsibility to participate in the consideration of a subject that certainly affects its security. Hence, we are firmly convinced that the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field is an essential one and must be strengthened.

In that respect this year is being highlighted by two very important events in the field of multilateral disarmament that closely involve the Organization. First, there is the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to which my country gives a high priority. We would like the Non-Proliferation Treaty to be a universal and effective instrument. Immediately after this session of the Disarmament Commission the first session of the amendment conference of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water will be held. My delegation believes that that session would provide an appropriate framework within which to achieve a complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests. Without denigrating others, the great merit of that Treaty is, first, the fact that it exists at all and, secondly, that it has already covered much of the ground towards a complete ban.

Another item to which my delegation attaches particular importance is the reduction of military expenditures. Notwithstanding the unprecedented improvement in the international climate the theory of deterrence continues alive and well, and the arms race, while it has slowed down considerably in certain areas, has not stopped. Vast sums of money continue to be spent on improved means of destruction

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

and on maintaining costly defence systems. We believe that putting an end to that trend is a categorical imperative based on both moral and rational considerations. Those financial resources could well be devoted to the struggle against tangible and global threats to the security of all countries without exception - underdevelopment, poverty, environmental deterioration, drug trafficking and international terrorism.

The relationship between disarmament and development is perhaps more evident today than ever before. In that connection it is our hope that the conclusion of the debate over the "peace dividends", from whatever source they are derived, will actually steer such dividends towards development, particularly of the developing countries. As an example, and one we would like to see emulated and improved upon, I would refer to the recommendation unanimously adopted last month by the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to establish a more peaceful world for children, calling upon States to consider devoting part of the resources freed by reductions in military spending to the financing of UNICEF programmes of co-operation in the developing countries.

With regard to the question of conventional disarmament we wish to associate ourselves with the unanimous expressions of satisfaction at the progress made and the encouraging prospects that exist for the negotiations at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in Vienna. We trust that the creation of regional consultation machinery in other parts of the world to deal with conventional disarmament and confidence-building will be given consideration by the States concerned. My delegation also believes that the establishment of zones of peace in various geographical regions - such as the South Atlantic, where my country is located - is another initiative that will help in confidence-building.

(Mr. Sader, Uruguay)

On the subject of international arms transfers, my delegation agrees that a distinction should be made between legal trade in armaments and illegal arms trafficking. We also believe that the Commission should consider measures to prevent the vast arsenals of weapons remaining as a result of arms-reduction agreements from becoming potential sources of "low-intensity regional conflicts" or from being used to revive existing conflicts.

Referring to South Africa's nuclear capability, we are encouraged by recent developments in southern Africa which will, we hope, lead to a peaceful and negotiated solution that will definitively remove the apartheid régime. We are also concerned, however, because the existence of nuclear weapons in that region is obviously a threat to the security of the African continent and, in the long run, to international peace and security.

For many years my country has believed in the value of the United Nations system in providing a multilateral solution to the major issues of disarmament and security. Today there are many factors that renew our faith, and we look forward with optimism to the work of this session of the Commission.

Mrs. FIFE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for the substantive 1990 session. We are sure that under your experienced guidance our work will proceed satisfactorily.

My delegation, like previous speakers, also wishes to acknowledge the progress made in negotiations on stability in Europe, given the vast arsenals of nuclear and conventional weapons that are present in that region, one which has, indeed, served as the arena for the two major world wars of this century. We also recognize that the agreements signed in 1987 between the Soviet Union and the United States have

(Mrs. Fife, Cuba)

helped to relax tensions between those countries, thanks to the decisive contribution of the Soviet Union's peace-loving policy.

However, the influence of those negotiations and initiatives on the third world has not been commensurate. The immense majority of developing countries do not possess nuclear weapons, nor are their conventional arsenals excessive. Their real problems do not emanate from the arms race between the great Powers but, rather, they are the creation of poverty, hardship, malnutrition, illiteracy and poor sanitary conditions. It is of no benefit to the peoples of the developing countries for the great Powers to move down the road towards arms reduction unless that move is accompanied by a real increase in the flow of resources to the developing countries and by a radical change in the unjust and inequitable structures that now exist in today's international economic relations. Hence the unquestionable link between disarmament and development, which cannot fail to be a constant feature in the pleas our Organization makes on behalf of a world of peace and progress.

(Mrs. Fife, Cuba)

Moreover, the apparent trend towards détente between the great Powers has had no decisive impact on the security of the third world. We do not live in a world where tension, aggression, the use and threat of use of force and coercion have yielded to a spirit of genuine co-operation. Peace is and must be indivisible. It is inadmissible for peace and co-operation to be established between the great Powers while we in the third world continue to be subjected to theories - like that of "low-intensity wars" promulgated by the United States Department of Defense - that make us feel ever more insecure in an ever more unequal world.

Suffice it to say that during this period the United States Government, in another manifestation of its imperial arrogance, has prevented in practice the spirit of détente from spreading to the third world by assuming the right to military intervention in Panama, causing thousands of victims among the civilian population and irreparable material damage.

Aggression and threats against Cuba also form part of this picture. Illegal television broadcasts to my country by the most technologically advanced Power in the world are also a part of that policy; their defeat by a handful of young Cuban technicians trained by the Revolution proves that the countries of the third world can, with determination, resist the aggressive designs of imperialism.

Because of the strict secrecy in which they were carried out, many representatives may not know that in the last few days the United States armed forces have been carrying out large-scale manoeuvres in an area of the Caribbean, with implied exercises in aggression against my country. This time the danger is that there are three military exercises at once: "Ocean Venture", which involved air and naval landings in parts of Puerto Rico; the supposedly defensive "Defex" exercises, which included the evacuation of civilian personnel from the naval base the United States Government maintains on Cuban territory against the will of my

(Mrs. Fife, Cuba)

country; and "Global Shield", a strategic manoeuvre which took place in areas close or adjacent to Cuban territory, which among other big units of the United States armed forces included the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Assault Division and the 24th Armoured Infantry Division. Those exercises also involved participation by hundreds of aircraft, including tactical fighters and B-52 and B-1B strategic bombers, which as part of these manoeuvres advanced on a war footing to the very limits of my country's airspace, along with numerous warships such as the BB-64 cruiser.

In those circumstances, can Cuba or the many other countries which have been or could be victims of aggression or the threat of aggression affirm that there is a more secure atmosphere in international relations today?

In our view, thorough analysis of this and other questions is one of the fundamental matters on which multilateral disarmament forums should concentrate so they can be, as we feel they should be, an expression of the international community's genuine aspirations to peace and security for all.

In its more than a decade of uninterrupted work the Disarmament Commission has striven to make progress on the substantive items on its agenda. Its working methods have not, as some have argued, prevented success; the real blame lies with the lack of political will on the part of certain countries which, while in our meetings coldly opposing consideration of crucially important items, at the same time promote negotiations involving a group of countries and regions, negotiations intended to deny them the opportunity to acquire the weapons they need to exercise their inalienable right to self-defence in a world fraught with danger and all manner of threats to their security. We therefore reaffirm the validity of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which clearly assigns the highest priority to nuclear disarmament.

(Mrs. Fife, Cuba)

Global security cannot be based on the assumption that certain kinds of weapons are necessary for the security of some countries and are anathema if possessed by other countries. The commitment to abolish nuclear weapons forever must be universal, not partial or selective, because a weapons system cannot be viewed in two different ways: attractive to some and repulsive to others. All must repudiate these weapons, and disarmament measures must begin with the countries that possess the largest arsenals.

There are external and internal factors that give each region special characteristics that must be taken into account, just as we must take into account the individual will of the countries of a region and their inalienable right of sovereignty in the implementation of any disarmament measure, even though that measure might have been useful and necessary in other contexts and other latitudes.

The basic task of the United Nations is to guarantee international peace and security, which is why we believe that, so long as there are no effective steps towards general and complete disarmament in keeping with the priorities I have set out, peace and security for small countries will belong only to those able to prepare for self-defence.

South Africa's nuclear capability is another matter deserving of the Disarmament Commission's special attention. There can be no doubt that the policy the Pretoria régime has been carrying out poses a threat to the peace and security of the countries of the region, which have been victim of its policy of aggression and intimidation. We hope this Commission's mandate will enable it this year to issue recommendations and clear, unequivocal statements on one of the most critical items on the agenda.

(Mrs. Fife, Cuba)

Contrary to the spirit that seems to prevail in favour of peace, the naval arms race continues to darken the horizon. The lack of consideration of that item prompts us to demand that the great Powers take the first steps in this matter and begin negotiations on the eradication of these weapons which have actually been used in imperialist violations of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of third-world countries.

(Mrs. Fife, Cuba)

The proclamation of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade has been given an enthusiastic welcome by my country because Cuba feels that this decision will contribute positively to multilateral disarmament efforts.

I wish now to refer to the ideas suggested for restructuring the work of the Commission. We believe that the work of any international organ must be appropriate to the time, but a note of caution should be sounded here. We must be careful to ensure that an ill-considered and hasty adjustment of our work does not damage established priorities and run counter to the legitimate aspirations of the majority of members of the Commission.

My delegation is confident that the success of this session of the Commission will derive not only from the expression of the political will of its members but also from the extent to which all of us will be able to take into account the demands of the international community, in particular the demands of the third world.

Mr. FAHMY (Egypt): First I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this session of the Disarmament Commission. Your election comes at a very important time in our work, when we have embarked on a new phase of the disarmament process in the Commission. Our congratulations are also conveyed to the other officers of the Commission.

I should like to welcome the delegation of Namibia, which is here participating in the endeavours of the world community on disarmament.

This session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission has been convened in unique and auspicious circumstances. We have seen changes of momentous dimensions and paramount importance for the future of mankind. After more than four decades of polarization and the rampant use of force in international relations despite the universal commitment embodied in the Charter of the United Nations to refrain from

(Mr. Fahmy, Egypt)

such action, we have in recent times witnessed a growing commitment to peaceful coexistence, dialogue and co-operation. The international community is finally attempting to translate the lofty principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations into concrete tangible actions, giving expression to the basic tenets upon which our present world order was established, foremost among which are that the interests of the nations of the world are interdependent and that international co-operation among equals and for the benefit of all is a condition sine qua non for peace, stability and prosperity at present and in the future.

Egypt's joy regarding these developments is surpassed only by its frustration over the years in which the calls for depolarization and peaceful coexistence made by the non-aligned and third world countries, as far back as the Bandung Conference, have fallen on deaf ears and remained unheeded, overrun by grand designs and an insatiable desire for domination. Egypt has never questioned the genius and the inherent wisdom of the basic tenets of the Charter, and they can best be appreciated from the magnitude of the changes we have recently witnessed.

Without endeavouring to review these developments, we are confident that one clear conclusion can be drawn from the exhilarating experiences of recent years: the majority of the nations of the world are, to a great extent, gradually repudiating the use of force and asserting a sincere desire to address their differences through serious dialogue. They are searching together for mutually acceptable solutions to outstanding issues, rather than seeking vantage points from which to embark upon another round of adversarial confrontation, as was often the case in the past.

Many examples could be given to support those conclusions. However, we sincerely believe that they are self-evident and that none is necessary. For the sake of symbolism, and with direct relevance to disarmament alone, the subject of

(Mr. Fahmy, Egypt)

our work here in the Commission, I would mention the forthcoming summit meeting between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, with its potential for adding impetus to the disarmament process. I would mention also the developments between the two major alliances, which, irrespective of the ultimate results, have led them to reassess the premise upon which they were established, as the potential for military confrontation between them gradually recedes into oblivion. It is our considered opinion that the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission should be influenced by these encouraging developments and imbued with the same spirit of co-operation, which has brought them to fruition.

The artificial distinction often drawn by some between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy cannot be sustained in the light of the magnitude of the changes we have witnessed and the wide diversity of disarmament issues now under serious consideration, which involve weapons systems readily available to a wide range of States. I would add that to entertain arguments about the virtues of multilateralism as against bilateralism, while valid, would be an exercise in wasteful redundancy. The world community is now seized of disarmament issues, and we should address them with creativity, determination and dispatch.

The items before the Disarmament Commission this year cover a wide range of issues, involving global nuclear and conventional disarmament, regional concerns such as the nuclear capability of South Africa, specific disarmament issues such as the naval arms race, confidence-building measures such as objective information on military matters and topics particularly relevant to the work of the United Nations - the Declaration of the Third Disarmament Decade and the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. The diversity of our agenda underlines the inevitability of considering a multitude of interrelated issues in addressing the global security concerns of States. This is even more valid when States

(Mr. Fahmy, Egypt)

consider their mutual security concerns as threats to their security become more acute and urgent.

Egypt has a long-standing record of active engagement in disarmament, particularly in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and its predecessor bodies, and also in seizing the initiative in proposing regional disarmament measures, such as the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, supporting the denuclearization of Africa and, most recently, declaring the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction - that is, nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction - and their delivery systems. In this connection we have emphasized the following points: that all weapons of mass destruction, without exception, should be prohibited in the Middle East; that all States in the region, without exception, should make equal and reciprocal commitments in this regard; that verification measures and modalities should be established with regard to full compliance by all States of the region with the full scope of the prohibitions and without exception.

Over the years we have sincerely engaged in negotiations on all disarmament issues, even those that we did not consider nationally to be of the utmost priority. I can confirm today that we shall pursue this long-standing policy and respond constructively to the concerns of all peace-loving States as they present to us their security concerns. I believe we are justified in expecting that this attitude will be reciprocated as we strive together in harmony towards a more secure and stable world.

I take this opportunity to invite delegations here to reassess the positions they have traditionally taken in the Disarmament Commission. I invite them to bring the spirit of dialogue, which is gaining strength world wide, to the work of the Commission. I call upon them to listen to and consider the security concerns

(Mr. Fahmy, Egypt)

of others as they present and defend their own. We should ask ourselves: can the Disarmament Commission remain silent on nuclear-disarmament issues even though the embargo on nuclear-disarmament measures has been lifted through the conclusion of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty) and while disarmament proposals are being exchanged between the two super-Powers at a pace which is mind-boggling even to some of their own experts and strategists? It is also inexcusable to continue our deadlock on conventional weapons while progress in this domain is going on at a rapid pace in the most heavily armed theatre in the world.

(Mr. Fahmy, Egypt)

Can we not break out of our deadlock on this issue, which is instigated by the insistence of some on imposing their recipe for success on others, irrespective of whether it is valid or applicable to their circumstances, and which is exacerbated by the inability of others to submit a comprehensive, cogent alternative or learn from the experiences gained in other arduous negotiations?

Egypt is also seriously perturbed at the fact that the Commission has been unable in the past to make a unanimous determination regarding South Africa's nuclear capability even after that country's high officials openly acknowledged that it had nuclear-weapon capability. Nor can we justify the lethargic pace of consideration of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and apparent wavering by some regarding that role even though it is enshrined in the Charter and has been reaffirmed over the years. The situation is particularly agonizing and inexcusable at a time when the role of the United Nations in international affairs is finally being given well-deserved recognition.

The General Assembly at its forty-fourth session adopted without a vote a resolution embodying recommendations on how to rationalize the work of the Disarmament Commission. Egypt fully supports the objectives of that process, which is aimed at making our work more effective and a worthy contribution to the disarmament process. The specific procedural suggestions made by the General Assembly and considered by the Commission at this session, while useful, will prove worthy and effective only if applied in a serious and balanced manner, backed by the political will necessary for all of us to engage sincerely in a discussion of the security and concerns of others. Good will begets good will.

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over the work of our Commission at its 1990 session. You have long worked on questions of disarmament - at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, where we first met, and in New York, at the General Assembly's 1982 and 1988 special sessions devoted to disarmament, and at the important session of the Conference on Disarmament. You also played a particularly subtle and capable role in conducting consultations on naval armaments and disarmament. Your country contributed to the maintenance of peace in my country at the dawn of its independence, and you may be assured of my delegation's full co-operation during your term.

I reiterate my congratulations and thanks to the other Commission officers, and I wish them success in their work; they all bear a heavy burden. To the Secretary-General, to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, and to Mr. Lin and Mr. Kheradi, Secretaries of the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee respectively, I convey my appreciation for the remarkable way in which they discharge their responsibilities within the United Nations system in the delicate sphere of disarmament. Their contribution constantly strengthens the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

The current substantive session of the Disarmament Commission is marked by the new orientation of its work in line with the spirit and letter of General Assembly resolution 44/119 C, the annex to which sets out reforms intended to improve the functioning of the Disarmament Commission, and by a new shape in international relations which strengthens the current rapprochement among various political systems and which thus hastens the process of increased understanding and unity among divided peoples.

States Members of the United Nations must do all they can to encourage the process of nuclear disarmament in conformity with paragraph 49 of the resolution

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

adopted at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, which states that this process should be carried out in such a way, and requires measures to ensure, that the security of all States is guaranteed at progressively lower levels of nuclear armaments, taking into account the relative qualitative and quantitative importance of the existing arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States and other States concerned.

The special responsibility of the two great nuclear Powers, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is stressed, with the intention that they should conclude as soon as possible agreements on the limitation of strategic weapons and proceed to major joint reductions and qualitative limitations of strategic weapons.

The important step taken by the two super-Powers with the Treaty signed at Washington on 7 December 1987 and ratified at Moscow on 1 June 1988 on the elimination of shorter-range and medium-range nuclear missiles opened the way to a new era of East West relations and led to a new wave of parliamentary democratization.

One of the direct consequences of this new political climate is reflected in the negotiations on the unification of the two Germanys, which have been divided since the end of the Second World War. It goes without saying that on the way towards unification there will arise some new ideas about the aspect relating to the re-evaluation of the reasons for the existence of the North Atlantic Treaty on the one hand and the Warsaw Pact on the other. Just as Western Europe feared the danger of Soviet expansion, a corollary of which was seen in the events of 1948 in Czechoslovakia and the anxiety they caused, marking the start of the North Atlantic Treaty, so Eastern Europe reacted by adopting the Warsaw Pact in order to ensure

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its own military protection. The vicissitudes associated with the birth of the North Atlantic Treaty from March 1948 to April 1949 included the signing of the Brussels Treaty, the vote by the United States Senate on the Vandenberg resolution, which enabled Secretary of State Marshall to act, the official application of Italy for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and finally, the Soviet protest of 31 March 1948 against NATO. In response to that protest, the Western European ministers affirmed that the Treaty was directed not against any nation or group of nations but simply against armed aggression. They added that all the Soviet Union had to do was abstain from such an attack.

This brief historical summary reminds us, in the present context, of the East-West negotiations aimed at defining the future of a Europe stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, in a climate of confidence and co-operation.

Thus, the Helsinki Conference provided the basis for the preparation of measures that would build confidence among all European States and could lead to a merger of the existing alliances.

Do the halting of nuclear tests and the achievement of nuclear disarmament have the highest priority in the present dialogue between East and West - that is to say, between all the members of those two blocs - or is that priority limited to the two super-Powers? In spite of the consideration of this question by the Conference on Disarmament, consultations are continuing on the question of a mandate for a special committee under the agenda item on the cessation of nuclear tests. The same is true with regard to the question of nuclear disarmament, on which very little progress has been achieved so far. Thus, at a time when East-West rapprochement is emerging, is there really a political will for disarmament?

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

Concerning conventional disarmament, my delegation feels that until a body responsible for verifying the reduction of conventional weapons is set up and a global disarmament programme to that end is adopted, even with all the unilateral statements of intention by States tending to give credibility to the idea of the reduction or limitation of a category of weapons or conventional military arsenals, it would be extremely difficult to achieve general and complete disarmament in the area of conventional weapons.

The question of South Africa's nuclear capability deserves special emphasis at this time, when negotiations have begun between the black and white communities with a view to a review of the constitution aimed at abolishing the apartheid system and establishing a multiracial democratic State in South Africa. The success of those negotiations - and my delegation fervently hopes that they will be successful - will immediately reduce the impact of South Africa's nuclear capability on the climate of confidence that should prevail in the future between that State and its neighbours.

We have adopted ways and means of enhancing the functioning of the Disarmament Commission with a view to enabling the Commission to play a role in the disarmament field as a deliberative body within the United Nations system. The implementation of those reforms requires of all States the political will to ensure that, starting in 1991, no topic can, in principle, remain on the working agenda for more than three successive years.

My delegation will make its contribution to that end, in the light of the hope raised by the improvement in the international climate and the strengthening of relations of confidence not only among the States of the North but also among the States of the South, where many conflicts have arisen, and between the States of the South and those of the North.

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard the last speaker for this afternoon's meeting. I shall now call upon representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I would remind delegations that, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, only two statements in exercise of the right of reply are allowed, the first limited to 10 minutes and the second to 5 minutes.

Mr. MOHAMMED (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Chairman, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to express my delegation's admiration for the manner in which you are presiding over the work of the Disarmament Commission and to congratulate you on your election to guide our work. I also wish to express congratulations to the other officers of the Commission.

I regret that I am obliged to speak in exercise of the right of reply in this context, but I cannot help it. What the representative of Iran has said with regard to armaments in the Middle East raises many suspicions. The first concerns the innocence of the Iranian régime in respect of its eight years of aggression, during which it used chemical weapons against Iraq. That use has been verified in many documents on both the international and the regional level which prove that the Iranian régime has resorted to the use of chemical weapons. The most recent report on the war between Iraq and Iran was issued by the Pentagon and proves that Iran used chemical weapons in the north of Iraq, especially against Halabja in March of 1988, when it occupied that city, and that Iran lied when it accused Iraq of doing so.

I do not intend to go into details, but I would point out that Iraq believes that peace should prevail in the region and that it should be a nuclear-weapon-free and chemical-weapon-free zone; that position was made clear by President Saddam Hussein at his recent meeting with members of the United States Senate at

(Mr. Mohammed, Iraq)

Baghdad, when he stated that Iraq was ready to destroy all its weapons if the other parties would do the same.

We cannot ignore here the relationship that exists between nuclear and chemical weapons in the region and the nuclear, chemical and bacteriological arsenal of the Zionist entity in Israel, which has launched aggressive campaigns against many countries, including its 1981 attack against Iraq and its nuclear reactor.

With regard to the allegation of the representative of the Iranian régime concerning the implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), everyone knows that Iran rejected that resolution for a year and accepted it only after its failure and defeat. Iraq advocates peace and will always support efforts to realize a world free from aggression and attack.

Mr. NAIMI-ARFA (Islamic Republic of Iran): As all representatives are fully aware, the use of chemical weapons is not a subject of bilateral relations. It is an issue of concern to the international community. That is why most representatives in their statements at this session of the Disarmament Commission have touched upon that vital issue and expressed their concerns regarding it.

I would reiterate here that Iraq, in the course of an imposed war, used chemical weapons against Iran. The resolutions of the Security Council and reports of United Nations investigating teams dispatched to the region clearly affirm it, and no report can distort those naked facts. I suggest that the representative of Iraq should refer to those documents and reports to see who has used chemical weapons on an extensive scale.

With regard to the reports to which the representative of Iraq referred, I will say only that those reports are baseless accusations circulated by Iraq and those who support it. No one can deny the painful event of the holocaust at Halabja, which Iraq created through bombardments and the use of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Naimi-Arfa, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Those reports were made to distort the very clear facts about the painful and horrendous use of chemical weapons by that country.

As regards Security Council resolution 598 (1987), we called in our statement for complete implementation of that resolution. We repeat once again that we have fully co-operated with the Secretary-General and have accepted his proposals and initiatives in that regard. That should be reciprocated.

Mr. MOHAMMED (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): It would appear that the Iranian representative insists that we discuss secondary questions: Security Council resolution 598 (1987) and the accusations he has made. But everyone knows that there are two régimes in our region known to commit acts of aggression against Iraq. The first is Iran, which fought Iraq for eight years, even though it accepted the Security Council resolution prior to the end of the conflict. The other is the racist Tel Aviv réqime, known for its expansionist, aggressive policy and its violation of the rights of the Palestinians; the best example of its policy is the aggression against Iraq's nuclear reactor. Those are the obstacles to peace and security in the region. Their policies are a constant source of regional tension.

My delegation reaffirms its position in favour of peace. But we shall retain our right to legitimate self-defence against any aggression, while at the same time prepared to destroy all nuclear, chemical and other weapons if the other parties agree to do the same. Obstructionist tactics and allegations in this Commission cannot hide aggressive intentions or help restore peace in this sensitive region.

Mr. NAIMI-ARFA (Islamic Republic of Iran): If Iraq is sincere in its claims with respect to the implementation of Security Council resolution 598 (1987), it should simply comply with the initiatives and proposals made by the

(Mr. Naimi-Arfa, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Secretary-General. Iran has already accepted those initiatives and proposals, and has been flexible in that regard.

Paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 598 (1987) is intended to determine responsibility for the conflict. Once again, if Iraq is sincere, it should comply with the initiatives and proposals of the Secretary-General.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: We have concluded our general exchange of views. Tomorrow we shall start full-scale work on substantive items at the level of subsidiary bodies.

As scheduled in the general programme of work, we shall have our next plenary meeting on Tuesday, 15 May, to receive progress reports from the subsidiary bodies.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.